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STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND COALITION WARFARE**

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**GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND
COALITION WARFARE**

by

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ABSTRACT

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One of the United States' foremost generals and one of its leading diplomats was General George C. Marshall. General Marshall's strategic leadership played a crucial role in mobilizing the US Army prior to and during World War II and in developing and executing the Grand Allied Strategy that defeated Germany and Japan. Draft FM 22-103 defines strategic leadership as the process used by a leader to affect the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing the organizational culture, allocating resources, directing through policy and directive and building consensus within a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous global environment which is marked by opportunities and threats. The strategic leader competencies are the foundation of the strategic leader's ability to lead in the strategic environment. General Marshall was a strategic leader who formulated, coordinated and applied the ends, ways and means to develop and execute the Allied Grand Strategy, and the strategic leader competencies were keystones in the foundation of his leadership. Today, senior military leaders studying the strategic leadership competencies of General Marshall will gain useful insight into joint and combined operations.

Part 1: Introduction

One of the United States' foremost generals and one of its leading diplomats was General George C. Marshall. General Marshall's strategic leadership played a crucial role in mobilizing the US Army prior to and during World War Two and in developing and executing the Grand Allied strategy that defeated Germany and Japan. Also, Marshall played a major role in shaping US foreign policy after the War as the US confronted the Soviet Union. Between 1939 and 1951, George Marshall was a key formulator of US policies. He served as World War II Army Chief of Staff (1939-1945), special Presidential Emissary to China (1945-1947), Secretary of State during the height of the Cold War (1947-1949) and Secretary of Defense during the Korean War (1950-1951). He was one of the creators not only of America's awesome military power but also of its major foreign policies and global strategies of the contemporary world.¹ He cast a giant historical shadow. His leadership qualities, self control, sense of honor and duty and apparent lack of personal ambition were so extraordinary that virtually every individual with whom he worked felt duty bound to recount and comment on them in husked tones of veneration.² Secretary of War Stimson, with whom General Marshall worked during World War II, noted that, "General Marshall built and trained the Army, estimated correctly the size it must

attain and insisted upon unity between the Services and between the Allies and who more than any one man conceived the American strategy.”³

During World War Two, General Marshall spent much of his time and energy searching for a unified strategy between the US and its Allies that would lead to victory. This proved to be no simple task because the war was fought on so many fronts and over such large areas. The battlefield was the entire globe and the problems of organization and coordination were unprecedented.⁴ His strategic leadership was paramount in bringing about the Grand Allied Strategy between the British and the United States that lead to the defeat of the Axis Powers, (Germany, Italy and Japan). Marshall was the individual who first proposed the cross-channel invasion of France in early 1942 and fought doggedly for it against repeated opposition from the British, the Navy and President Roosevelt (FDR).⁵

The debate over the Grand Allied Strategy carried on from the ARCADIA conference in December 1941 until the Allies made the final decision at the Teheran conference in November 1943.⁶ General Marshall participated in 11 different international conferences and entered into negotiations with every major political and military leader of the Grand Alliance to craft the strategy.⁷ The two year debate with the British centered on what approach to use. The US and Britain agreed that they should defeat Germany first. The differences in their strategic outlook lay in how each nation perceived the ends, ways and means needed to defeat Germany. The US, lead by Marshall, wanted to attack directly into France while the British favored an indirect approach through the

Mediterranean to wear the Germans down. General Marshall's strategic leadership played a key role in overcoming these problems. The result was a successful Grand Strategy that lead to the defeat of the Germans. After two full years of controversy and more than 90 days of meetings, the Allies adopted a unified coordinated strategy for the defeat of the Axis Powers. Marshall, finally wrung from the reluctant British their agreement to the Normandy landings and to a direct confrontation of the Germans.⁸ To bring about the final strategy, General Marshall championed the concepts that resulted in the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) organizations and unified command in all theaters.⁹

General Marshall was a strategic leader who formulated, coordinated and applied the ends, ways and means in developing and executing the Allied Grand Strategy. The foundation of Marshall's strategic leadership was his strategic leader competencies. In developing the British and American strategy against Germany, General Marshall displayed conceptual, technical and interpersonal strategic leadership competencies that are worthy of study. Today, our national military strategy relies on joint operations, alliances and coalitions for its implementation. The problems Marshall faced in crafting the strategy were political as well as military in nature, for interservice and interallied rivalries were so intense that they threatened to preclude any effective cooperation.¹⁰ Marshall survived early defeats, learned his lessons from them and returned to battle with a deeper understanding of all the complex factors involved in creating the Grand Strategy.¹¹ The study of Marshall's competencies will include a review of

the definition of strategic leadership and the definitions of each of the strategic leadership competencies. Then, an in depth study and analysis of General Marshall's strategic leader competencies in crafting the Grand Strategy will follow.

Part II: Strategic leadership

Draft FM 22-103, Strategic Leadership, dated July 1995, defines the operating milieu of the strategic leader as one that translates a predicted future into a visionary but achievable future. The strategic leader is instrumental in making the changes and taking the initiatives necessary to formulate the strategy's ends, ways and means to accomplish the visionary future.¹² Strategic leadership is the effective practice of the strategic art.¹³ The strategic leader must simultaneously be able to comprehend and operate at the levels of national security, national military strategy and theater strategy. In the context of the national security affairs, senior leaders must be able to skillfully formulate, coordinate and apply ends, ways and means at hand to promote the national interests.¹⁴ In this complex political environment, military expertise and traditional command and leadership skills must be supplemented by a keen understanding of underlying political, military and economic issues, peer leadership and consensus-building skills and the ability to secure the cooperation of organizations and personalities beyond one's direct influence and control.¹⁵ The strategic leader provides vision and focus, capitalizes on command and peer leadership skills and inspires others to think and act.¹⁶ The strategic leadership competencies are the foundation for this leadership.

The strategic leadership competencies are the knowledge, skills, attributes and capacities that enable the strategic leader to perform the required

tasks of developing the vision and its ends, ways, and means. Strategic leader competencies are built on the foundation of leadership requirements at lower levels.¹⁷ A competency may be based on natural ability or may be derived from education, training or experience. The major categories of leadership competencies are conceptual, technical and interpersonal.

The strategic leadership conceptual competencies consist of the thinking skills necessary to understand and deal with the complex.¹⁸ The strategic leader must think holistically, must mesh the different instruments of national power, and must understand the strengths and weaknesses of the various organizations and agencies involved in national security.¹⁹ The strategic conceptual competencies include frame of reference development, problem management and envisioning the future.²⁰

Frame of reference development provides the strategic leader with a map of the strategic world. The frame of reference provides a basis of observation and judgment of the significant factors in the strategic environment with cause and effect interrelationship.²¹ The frame of reference develops over time from school, experiences and self study. The leader must reflect on, rethink and learn from past experiences. The strategic leader must be open to new experiences and input from others including subordinates. A well-developed frame of reference also gives the strategic leader a thorough understanding of organizational subsystems. The understanding enables visualizing the interactive dynamics of the total system as the leader manages problems.²²

The strategic leader must have the capability to manage a problem towards resolution. This involves applying past experiences, identifying and creating patterns, discarding non-useable data, understanding second and third order effects, maintaining flexibility and knowing what is an acceptable outcome.²³ One of the foremost skills a strategist must have is the ability to select and extract vital information from the great mass of useless information provided.²⁴ This allows the strategic leader to see beyond the obvious in information received and to know what is missing and then to go out and get what is needed.²⁵ With the information gained, the strategic leader manages the problem towards the desired outcome modifying and adjusting the critical approach.

Envisioning the future is the third strategic leader conceptual competency. Envisioning is the capability to formulate and articulate strategic aims and key concepts, and it is perhaps the most significant capacity of the strategic leader.²⁶ The strategic leader's vision is an image of the future state and the process the organization uses to guide future developments.²⁷

The knowledge of the external political, economic and cultural systems that impact the organization is the foundation of the strategic leader technical competencies. Technical competencies include the understanding of organizational systems, an appreciation of functional relationships outside the organization and the knowledge of the broader political and social systems within which the organization operates.²⁸ First, the understanding of the system focuses on how the organization fits within the broader arena. The leader must understand the separate role he plays, the boundaries of these roles, their

demands and constraints and the expectations of other departments and agencies.²⁹ Next, the leader must have the ability to participate effectively in the interdepartmental process in national security policy formulation and execution. The strategic leader must understand joint and combined operations. Each service has developed a different culture, vocabulary and expectations.³⁰ Each nation has different operating practices and principles which impact operations of a joint and combined force. Finally, the leader must have the capacity for interacting with the executive and legislative branches of the government.³¹ The strategic counsel the leader provides to the political authorities at every level of strategy is critical.³²

The strategic leader interpersonal competencies include the ability to build consensus within the organization, the ability to negotiate with external agencies or organizations in attempt to shape or influence the external environment and the ability to communicate internally and externally.³³ First, strategic leaders spend much of their time with outside organizations. Thus, consensus on issues is necessary if coordinated and effective action is to take place. Consensus building is a complicated process based on effective reasoning and logic that may take place over an extended period. Strategic leaders must be persuasive yet willing to compromise when necessary. In essence, the process of consensus building, usually among peers, is insurance that effective reasoning has taken place and that tough issues have been resolved.³⁴

Negotiation is likewise a key interpersonal competency of the strategic leader. The leader must be able to stand firm on non-negotiable points while simultaneously communicating respect for other participants. The leader must have the ability and skill in listening, skill in diagnosing unspoken agendas and the capacity to detach oneself personally from the negotiation process. The essence of successful negotiating is communicating a clear position on an issue while still conveying a willingness to compromise.³⁵ Finally, the strategic leader must effectively communicate within the organization and externally with Congress, government agencies, national political leaders and allies. The strategic leader must have the ability to inspire great efforts from within and from without the organization.³⁶ Possessing these communicative attributes, coupled with a high degree of persuasiveness provides the leader with the necessary tools to build support, build consensus and negotiate successfully.³⁷

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Part III: General Marshall's Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership competencies were the foundation of General Marshall's strategic leadership. The competencies General Marshall displayed in the development of the Grand Allied Strategy included conceptual, technical and interpersonal leadership traits.

General Marshall's conceptual or thinking competencies gave him the ability to formulate, shape and enact the Allied Grand strategy. His frame of reference, his ability to manage problems to a successful conclusion and most importantly his formulation of an achievable vision were crucial in developing the strategy that lead to defeat of the Axis Powers.

General Marshall had keen insight and the ability to grasp the complexities of global war. His frame of reference gave him these abilities. His frame of reference development came from over 30 years of service in the Army prior to becoming the Chief of Staff. His service in World War One, where he worked for General Pershing, convinced General Marshall of the importance of interallied as well as interservice cooperation.³⁸ Marshall's experiences in the First World War taught him much about fielding an army under wartime conditions. He learned that there needed to be unity of command and unity of effort between the Allies and between the Services to bring a decisive quick victory. The lessons he learned from World War One included: the lack of cooperation and the lack of unity of command among the Allies had caused the loss of many lives and much time in the defeat of Germany; and that a direct

approach of attacking straight at the enemy's source of power, the German military, was the route to the quickest victory. Marshall, based on his World War I experiences, called for one person in each theater under the combined body (the CCS) in Washington to direct activities in each theater. Marshall stated, "we had come to this in the First World War, but it was not until 1918 that it was accomplished, and much valuable time, blood and treasure had been needlessly sacrificed."³⁹

Besides his vision of how to defeat the Germans, General Marshall showed his strategic leadership most clearly in his ability to manage a problem to a successful outcome. The major problem faced by the US and Britain was in each nation's approach towards defeating the Germans. This argument pitted the British indirect or peripheral approach via encirclement of Germany against the American direct approach through a massive invasion of northwestern Europe.⁴⁰ Both sides agreed that the ends of the strategy were to defeat Germany first. They were in full agreement that continuous and violent offensive action was needed.⁴¹ However, they disagreed on the ways to defeat Germany. From Marshall's standpoint, the Mediterranean road was not the shortest to victory. It was Marshall's fear that the British approach would leave the US forces in the Pacific beleaguered and neglected for months perhaps years, that prompted his fierce efforts to tie the British to a major offensive against the Germans.⁴² This disagreement began at the ARCADIA conference in late 1941 and ended in November 1943 at the Teheran conference. At the Teheran

conference, the Allies agreed to the OVERLORD operation that included a 1 May 1944 invasion of France and an American commander.

At the ARCADIA conference and immediately afterward, Marshall proposed his direct approach strategy to defeat the Germans. He proposed BOLERO, the buildup of forces in England for a cross-channel attack, ROUNDUP, a cross-channel attack in 1943 and SLEDGEHAMMER in 1942 as an emergency cross-channel attack in case the Soviet Union was about to collapse. However, the British disagreed and thought Marshall naive in his approach to the Grand Strategy.

In March 1942, Marshall briefed FDR on his proposed strategy and won his approval. FDR sent Marshall and Harry Hopkins to convince Churchill, the British Chiefs of Staff and the British War Cabinet on this strategy. Marshall believed he had won their agreement but found out later the agreement had dissolved in a matter of hours.⁴³ While in London, Marshall sent a message to General McNarney, Deputy Army Chief of Staff, stating, that Churchill and the British had accepted the concept of his plan, and then Marshall directed the Army Staff to start planning.⁴⁴ Churchill, however, temporarily derailed Marshall's efforts to create a coherent and unified strategy.⁴⁵

Churchill simply went around Marshall and convinced FDR that the indirect approach through North Africa and the Mediterranean was the best strategy at the time. An age-long British way of thinking, tested in the trial of centuries which Liddel Hart called "the indirect approach" had triumphed over the American instinct to go for the jugular.⁴⁶ On no other issue in the war did

Marshall and the President disagree so fundamentally or so vociferously, and at no other time during the war was Marshall so humiliated. Roosevelt had followed the advice of a British Prime Minister over his chief military adviser. The Prime Minister quickly turned Marshall's April 1942 victory into a stinging defeat. The fundamental flaw in the plan had been the inability to guarantee an offensive in 1942.⁴⁷

Marshall was a quick learner and not one to dwell on defeat. Even before the Casablanca conference in January 1943, he had begun to assess the reason for failure and to reformulate a united front with Admiral King, the Chief of the US Navy, around the concept of a cross-channel attack.⁴⁸ Through this experience, he learned that the US needed to prepare better in dealing with the British. As his first step, Marshall crafted the US Joint Chiefs Of Staff (JCS), which would form a solidified US military front in dealing with the President and the British. Next, to minimize Churchill's influence, Marshall kept FDR better informed on JCS positions prior to conferences.

One of the fundamental lessons Marshall learned was that a democracy must have a successful offensive every year. Marshall stated, "we failed to see that the leader must keep the people entertained. That may sound like the wrong word, but it conveys the thought that the people demand action."⁴⁹ Next, Marshall was responsible for the establishment and smooth functioning of the Anglo-American coordinating machinery.⁵⁰ Marshall followed this by better preparation and presentations to the British on the US positions. Overtime, the pendulum began to swing in favor of the US position. As the US resources of

personnel and equipment increased, Marshall was able to convince the British that the cross-channel attack was the route to take. By November 1943, Marshall had successfully guided the direct approach strategy to a successful conclusion.

The most important strategic leader competency is the ability of the leader to envision a future and translate it into clear and definable terms. General Marshall's envisioning capability was superb. He had a vision of creating and building the US Army and he had a vision of the ends, ways and means needed to defeat the Germans.

By November 1940, the direction of things to come had become sufficiently clear to General Marshall that he concurred with a Navy study that provided for offensive action in the Atlantic in conjunction with the British, while maintaining a defensive attitude in the Pacific.⁵¹ Churchill wrote, "On Grand Strategy the staffs agreed that only the minimum of forces necessary for safe guarding of vital interests in other theaters should be diverted from operations against Germany. No man had more to do with obtaining this cardinal decision than General Marshall."⁵² Marshall's fixed opinion was that Hitler's Germany was the primary opponent to be disposed of, and that the best method was to make the main effort a cross-channel amphibious expedition into Hitler's heartland.⁵³ The end that Marshall saw was the defeat of Germany first, the ways would come through a direct attack across the English channel into France which would utilize the British and American military as the means to the ends. Marshall's vision would take over two years to gain approval and would result in the OVERLORD operation crossing the channel in June 1944.

The Allies reached the OVERLORD decision after the longest and most anxious strategic debate of the war.⁵⁴ General Marshall's technical competencies including his ability to work with the other Services, his ability to work with the British and his ability to work with the President and the Congress enabled Marshall to enact his strategic vision.

General Marshall's ability to work and get along with the other Services greatly enhanced his ability to win support for his vision. Under General Marshall's guidance and prodding, President Roosevelt formed the JCS, a body similar to the Combined Chiefs of Staff. According to Marshall, "the President gave a speech which included the topic of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) organization and no one seemed to recognize it."⁵⁵ General Marshall, Admiral King, Admiral Leahy and General Arnold comprised the JCS. Marshall pushed for jointness at the top and aggressively sought unity of command to reduce the bureaucratic drag of interservice rivalry that could cost lives and delay victory.⁵⁶

Admiral King and General Marshall formed a superb team. King and Marshall were dissimilar in character and outlook and they combined after an uneasy start in the most successful partnership between the Services in American history. Their combination proved formidable. King brought to the JCS a clarity and sharpness in argument that otherwise had been lacking, and Marshall brought a firm patient guidance and steady comprehension of the needs of the competing interests. By the middle of the war, it was unthinkable that they could be divided and no element in the Services or in the country willingly challenged them on ground common to both.⁵⁷

Marshall was able to get Admiral King's support for the cross-channel strategy by a combination of personal diplomacy, promises to maintain sufficient reinforcements in the Southwest Pacific theater and the logic of his argument. He convinced King that only by concentrating in Britain and crossing the channel could the US relieve the pressure on the Russians and thus achieve the quick and decisive victory over Germany that was the necessary prerequisite to redeploy all US forces to the Pacific at a relatively early date. Marshall depersonalized conflicts with King through an objective focus on the facts and issues and by occasionally soothing the ego of King.⁵⁸

General Marshall recognized that interservice cooperation was a stepping stone to interallied cooperation. By pushing for jointness at the top, aggressively seeking unity of command through the JCS and the President, the US was able to deal with the British as a unified front. By the time of the TRIDENT conference in May 1943, the US position had solidified and the ability of the JCS to control the tempo of discussion with the British had vastly improved. By dint of cool authority, Marshall became the acknowledged leader of the JCS. He alone had held his post since the outbreak of the war. He alone had the global vision to balance the competing European and Pacific theaters and commanders, the personal reputation to keep such headstrong men as Douglas McArthur and Joseph Stillwell in line and the charisma and expertise to convince Congress and the public that the war was in good hands.⁵⁹ Marshall had recognized that interservice jointness provided the framework for interallied cooperation that

allowed Marshall to hammer out agreeable relations with the English at a time when mistrust might easily have prevailed.⁶⁰

Marshall's technical competency of dealing with combined operations was unsurpassed. As his dealings with the British increased, he learned quickly how to interact with them and applied these lessons in drafting the Grand Strategy. He improved US relations with the British to obtain their agreement for the cross-channel attack. At first the British did not have a good view of Marshall. Marshall wrote, "I had a great sympathy for the British in their situation. First, they thought we couldn't create these divisions, then there was the fact that I hadn't commanded troops. So, they felt I didn't understand their problems."⁶¹

Marshall believed the most important decision maker on the British side that required convincing of the cross-channel attack was Churchill. Marshall felt, "that the British Chiefs of Staff had met daily for 18 months, had agreed on the basic issues and acted together in international conferences. They had made careful preparations of proposals and had a singleness of purpose with Churchill in control."⁶² Marshall's view of Churchill was that Churchill had a horror of bodies floating in the English Channel. Marshall stated, "but, once we got into Italy, Churchill was swayed. Initially, the dominant British thought was that they didn't think the US was capable of manufacturing the troops for a cross-channel attack and Churchill actually stated this."⁶³ At the Casablanca conference in January 1943, both Churchill and General Brooke, the Chief of the British Imperial Staff, agreed Marshall was the man they had to convince or circumvent.⁶⁴ The British placed the US on the defensive at the Casablanca

conference and won acceptance of much of their strategic approach to fighting the Germans.⁶⁵ Upon his return from Casablanca, Marshall was determined to avoid any repetition of British domination any future conference. He realized that the adoption of his vision would depend upon the US ability to achieve better organization and full unity before meeting the British again. At the TRIDENT conference, in July 1943, Marshall was better prepared and the US was able to dominate the conference. At the conference, the British felt Marshall gave the impression of maturity and strength. Marshall's ability to weigh calmly the conflicting factors in a problem and his rock-like confidence impressed his subordinates and associates and secured the ready acceptance of his policies by the Allies.⁶⁶

Technical strategic leader competencies also include the leader's ability to work within the political framework of the government. Marshall's dealings with Congress and President Roosevelt show his leadership ability in this area. Marshall was his own best liaison with Congress and the President. No one could have dealt with either of them better than he.⁶⁷ Marshall's superb relationship with Congress arose from the fact they trusted him to pursue the national interest. Marshall's professionalism, mastery of facts and obvious nonpartisanship reassured and astounded the Congress.⁶⁸ In his dealings with Congress, Marshall had a superb reputation and was able to allay Congresses fear over Britain's supposed dominance of the Alliance. Before the TRIDENT conference, Marshall bluntly informed a Senate subcommittee, "that the thought of political matters was necessarily always in the minds of the JCS, that they

were not naïve regarding Britain's united front methods and ideas and the JCS were now trying to get organized to be in a proper position to meet the British Chiefs of Staff.⁶⁹ Marshall was also responsible for establishing an Army liaison team with Congress. Marshall charged the team to keep him informed on the thoughts and actions of Congress as well as to present the Army's story when he could not be there.

At the White House, General Marshall's initial friend was Henry Hopkins who was a close advisor to FDR. Harry Hopkins had proved instrumental in Marshall's assignment as Army Chief of Staff.⁷⁰ Over the years, Marshall and FDR developed a durable and deep seated trust.⁷¹ Early in the war, President Roosevelt had made it abundantly clear to Marshall that the US aim was to win the war in the most efficient manner possible.⁷² This guidance had helped Marshall formulate the ends and means of the US national military strategy, but FDR's manner of conducting business and Churchill's initial influence impacted the ways the US went about trying to implement the strategy. At the ARCADIA conference in late 1941, FDR failed to keep his staff advised on his discussions with Churchill. Churchill briefed the British Chiefs of Staff regularly, and they were often better informed on Roosevelt's thinking than the American Service Chiefs.⁷³

In June 1942, Marshall worked hard to get the President to stand pat on the cross-channel attack for 1943. The President shifted when Churchill visited FDR. Marshall's job was to hold the President down to what they had agreed upon. However, it was difficult because the Navy was pulling everything toward

the Pacific and the President had a tendency to shift and handle things loosely and be influenced particularly by the British. This was one of the greatest challenges faced by Marshall. He learned from his initial failures with FDR. Marshall's solution was to prepare and brief FDR on a unified front by the JCS prior to and during each conference. From the Casablanca conference on, Marshall's relationship with FDR improved. He no longer ignored Marshall's advice and Marshall felt he had gained FDR's trust.⁷⁴

Prior to the TRIDENT conference, Marshall won FDR's agreement that their principle objective would be to pin down the British to a cross-channel attack at the earliest practicable date and to make full preparations for such an operation by the spring of 1944.⁷⁵ Marshall told FDR before TRIDENT, if the Prime Minister's analysis was wrong, that Churchill's strategy would lead to a war of blockade and attrition that the American people would not support. Confronted with such a protracted struggle, the American people would prefer to seek a decision in the Pacific and FDR agreed. Marshall had learned his lesson from 1942, when FDR had told Marshall it was necessary for US action every year.⁷⁶ In 1942, Marshall had failed to see that the leader of a democracy must keep the people entertained. The people demand action.⁷⁷

Interpersonal strategic competencies consist of the strategic leaders' ability to negotiate and reach consensus without giving in on any non-negotiable points. As important as the ability to negotiate and reach consensus is to the leader, the leader's ability to communicate with peers, superiors and within the organization is as important. General Marshall excelled in the interpersonal

strategic leader competencies. He was a skilled negotiator who was willing to compromise where he could to reach consensus during the numerous negotiating sessions he had with the British.

The history of Allied conferences would have been simpler if one could speak of an American case and British case. In actuality one finds the Americans against the British, the Army and the Air Force against the Navy and the Navy against McArthur with Marshall attempting to find a solution.⁷⁸ Throughout the war, in sessions with the British Chiefs of Staff, and with Air Marshal Portal, the British Air Chief, Marshall took the lead in trying to reach understandings and consensus when matters reached an impasse.⁷⁹

Two of the Allied conferences highlight Marshall's ability to negotiate, reach consensus and compromise to reach a decision. They were the Casablanca and the TRIDENT conferences. At Casablanca, the issue remained the cross-channel attack versus the continuation of the Mediterranean strategy. Marshall impressed the British with his friendliness and honesty of purpose. Marshall required time to consider all the arguments, and he needed convincing before changing his mind. It was a relief to the British to find that Marshall was not obstinate or rigid in his strategic views.⁸⁰ At the Casablanca conference, Marshall got much less than he wanted. However, he had been fairly certain before he came to the conference that he must accept a campaign against Sicily or Sardinia. Marshall proposed a compromise where all members backed Marshall's plan to consolidate in North Africa after Rommel's defeat, plan for continued action in the Mediterranean and continued concentration in England

for a cross-channel attack.⁸¹ Marshall accepted the compromise because he felt there were sufficient troops in the Mediterranean and the British refused to agree to a cross-channel attack in 1943. Marshall realized that his hoped for cross-channel attack was ruled out for the upcoming year but the buildup would continue in the United Kingdom.⁸²

At the TRIDENT conference, the British found the Americans united, organized and more determined than they had been at Casablanca. General Brooke commented that no major cross-channel attack was possible till 1945 or 1946. Marshall responded that the Mediterranean was a vacuum that would destroy a cross-channel attack for 1944. This would prolong the European war and thus lengthen the Japanese war, something the American people would not tolerate. Marshall further threatened to turn the American resources toward the Pacific.⁸³ Thus, with lots of tension, General Marshall suggested an off the record conference that the British accepted. The result was a compromise. The US agreed to exploit the Sicily campaign, the British agreed to a smaller scale cross-channel attack with a 1 May 1944 target date and both agreed to the transfer of seven divisions from the Mediterranean to participate in the cross-channel attack.⁸⁴ Marshall's calm hand had worked a compromise.⁸⁵

General Marshall communicated very clearly with superiors, peers and subordinates. When General Marshall spoke, he spoke from deep feeling. He achieved eloquence that was never forgotten by those who heard him.⁸⁶ At the Teheran conference, Churchill called upon Marshall to brief Stalin on the Allied situation and plans. Even though unprepared to brief, Marshall gave a superb

briefing. As FDR's confidence in Marshall grew, FDR accepted messages Marshall had drafted. Marshall stated, "I did help draft a good many messages-many towards the last years of the war. FDR was saddling me with more responsibility, and he was giving me the compliment of having a greater trust in my judgment and in my ability to handle these things."⁸⁷ To the Army he was short and to the point. He was able to communicate his vision and was able to motivate others to work towards that goal. Marshall would put out messages to his commanders detailing specific actions to be taken. One dated 11 September 1942 detailed the necessity and requirements for commanders to develop and maintain good relations with the British, Congress and the Navy.⁸⁸

Part IV: Conclusion

Strategic leadership is the process used by a leader to affect the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing the organizational culture, allocating resources, directing through policy and directive and building consensus within a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous global environment which is marked by opportunities and threats.⁸⁹ The strategic leader competencies are the foundation of the strategic leader's ability to lead in the strategic environment. The competencies are the knowledge, skills and capacities that enable the leader to perform his required tasks.⁹⁰ The strategic leader competencies include conceptual, technical and interpersonal components.

General Marshall was a strategic leader who formulated, coordinated and applied the ends, ways and means to develop and execute the Grand Strategy between the US and Britain to defeat Germany. General Marshall displayed all the strategic leader competencies in the execution of this mission. Today, US strategic leaders face many of the same challenges Marshall faced in developing and executing the Grand Allied Strategy. Leaders must formulate and execute strategies utilizing joint and combined operations. Thus, a study of General Marshall's strategic leader competencies is beneficial.

General Marshall's actions and accomplishments show best his strategic leadership competencies. He excelled in all three components. His conceptual

competencies, the most important of the three, included a well-developed frame of reference, the ability to manage problems to a successful conclusion and most of all the ability to envision a future. His experiences in World War I anchored his frame of reference. His ability to manage a problem is shown through his attending over eleven Allied conferences, the defeats he experienced, the lessons he learned and his ability to move the Allies toward the adoption of his direct approach vision. It took General Marshall almost two years, but he succeeded in obtaining his vision. His conceptual competencies set the stage for his accomplishment of the technical and interpersonal competencies.

His ability to work in the joint, combined and political environments sprung from his ability to think and see what was necessary to win the war. His joint and combined competencies allowed him to work towards unity of command and effort at both levels. His efforts to work at unity of command and effort is seen in the role Marshall played in the creation of the JCS, the CCS and his direct dealings with the British. Marshall's interaction with the President and Congress made him so essential to winning the war that even though considered the shoe-in for the commander of OVERLORD, FDR could not let Marshall go. FDR felt he needed Marshall to stay in Washington to help direct the war.

Finally, his ability to negotiate and reach a consensus allowed the Allies to develop the strategy to win the war. More often than not, he was the mediating influence on all which allowed progress. His great ability to communicate with superiors, peers and subordinates was the key that allowed him to lead the

negotiation process. General Marshall was a great strategic leader worthy of study not only for his building of the US Army during the War but also from his strategic vision of the ends, ways and means of defeating the Axis Powers.

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Endnotes

¹ Mark A. Stoler, George C. Marshall Soldier-Statesman of the American Century (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), ix.

² Ibid.

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⁴ Mark A. Stoler, George C. Marshall Soldier-Statesman of the American Century, 89.

⁵ Ibid., 107.

⁶ Chaplain Lawrence K. Brady, "Marshall's Strategy," The Army Quarterly and Defence Journal 103 (October 1972): 57.

⁷ Mark A. Stoler, George C. Marshall Soldier-Statesman of the American Century, 90.

⁸ Ed Cray, General of the Army George C. Marshall Soldier and Statesman, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1990), 7.

⁹ Mark A. Stoler, George C. Marshall Soldier-Statesman of the American Century, 107.

¹⁰ Ibid., 90.

¹¹ Ibid., 107.

¹² US Department of the Army, Strategic Leadership, Draft FM 2-103 (Washington: US Department of the Army, July 1995), 2.

¹³ Major General Richard A. Chilcoat, Strategic Art: The New Discipline for 21st Century Leaders (US Army War College: Strategic studies Institute, October 10, 1995), 1.

¹⁴ Ibid., 5 through 7.

¹⁵ Ibid., 7.

¹⁶ Ibid., 8.

¹⁷ Strategic Leadership, Draft FM 22-103, 5-1.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Chilcoat, 10.

²⁰ Strategic Leadership, Draft FM 22-103, 5-2.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 5-3.

²³ Ibid., 5-5.

²⁴ Chilcoat, 17.

²⁵ Strategic Leadership, Draft FM 22-103, 5-5.

²⁶ Strategic Leadership, Draft FM 22-103, 5-6.

²⁷ Ibid., 3-1.

²⁸ Ibid., 5-8.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Strategic Leadership, Draft FM 22-103, 5-8.

³¹ Ibid., 5-9.

³² Chilcoat, 4.

³³ Ibid., 5-11.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Chilcoat, 11.

³⁷ Strategic Leadership, Draft FM 22-103, 5-12.

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³⁹ Forest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 1, Ordeal and Hope, (New York: Viking Press, 1965), 276.

⁴⁰ Mark A. Stoler, The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), 3.

⁴¹ Kent Roberts Greenfield, American Strategy in World War II (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1963), 14.

⁴² Forest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 1, Ordeal and Hope, 349.

⁴³ Ibid., 313.

⁴⁴ Larry Bland and Sharon R. Ritenour, ed., "The Right Man for the Job," December 7, 1941-May 31 1943, vol. 3. The Papers of George Catlett Marshall (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1991), 161.

⁴⁵ Mark A. Stoler, George C. Marshall Soldier-Statesman of the American Century, 101.

⁴⁶ Eric Larrabee, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, His Lieutenants, and Their War, Commander in Chief (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 137.

⁴⁷ Mark A. Stoler, George C. Marshall Soldier-Statesman of the American Century, 100.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 102.

⁴⁹ Mark A. Stoler, George C. Marshall Soldier-Statesman of the American Century, 101.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Brady, 53.

⁵² Ibid., 57.

⁵³ Ibid., 54.

⁵⁴ Greenfield, 12.

⁵⁵ Pogue, George C. Marshall Interviews and Reminiscences, 308.

⁵⁶ Jay L. Lorenzen, "Marshall-ing Joint Leadership," Proceedings 120, no. 9 (1994): 78.

⁵⁷ Pogue, George C. Marshall Interviews and Reminiscences, 434.

⁵⁸ Lorenzen, 81.

⁵⁹ Cray, 5.

⁶⁰ Lorenzen, 78.

⁶¹ Pogue, George C. Marshall Interviews and Reminiscences, 590.

⁶² Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 1, Ordeal and Hope, 262.

⁶³ Pogue, George C. Marshall Interviews and Reminiscences, 588.

⁶⁴ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 2, Organizer of Victory, 19.

⁶⁵ Stoler, The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943, 79.

⁶⁶ Pogue, George C. Marshall Interviews and Reminiscences, 430.

⁶⁷ Larrabee, 105.

⁶⁸ Lorenzen, 79.

⁶⁹ Stoler, The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943, 92.

⁷⁰ Cray, 7.

⁷¹ Larrabee, 145.

⁷² Brady, 59.

⁷³ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 1, Ordeal and Hope, 264.

⁷⁴ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 2, Organizer of Victory, 69.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 196.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 243.

⁷⁷ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 1, Ordeal and Hope, 316.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 206.

⁷⁹ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 1, Ordeal and Hope, 271.

⁸⁰ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 2, Organizer of Victory, 32.

⁸¹ Stoler, The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943, 71.

⁸² Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 2, Organizer of Victory, 31.

⁸³ Stoler, The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943, 94.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 2, Organizer of Victory, 205.

⁸⁶ Pogue, George C. Marshall, vol. 1, Ordeal and Hope, 276.

⁸⁷ Pogue, George C. Marshall Interviews and Reminiscences, 419.

⁸⁸ Bland and Ritenour, ed., 355.

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